



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Lost Backpackers Found at Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, AZ. – At approximately 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 28, a National Park Service (NPS) search team found a pair of backpackers later confirmed to be Alan Humphrey and Iris Faraklas—the focus of an extensive search effort in an area 25 miles west of Grand Canyon Village in Grand Canyon National Park. The couple was found, tired but otherwise in good condition, in the Royal Arch route area. They were evacuated to the South Rim Helibase where they refused any medical treatment and were reunited with family members. They were reported to be extremely happy to be back on the South Rim.

NPS rangers and search teams had been attempting to locate the couple since a family member reported them as overdue on Sunday, May 25. During the investigation, it was determined that the pair had a permit to backpack the Royal Arch route from May 17 – 23, and that their vehicle was parked at the South Bass Trailhead—the entry point for the Royal Arch route. A search of the Royal Arch route and surrounding area was initiated. Search efforts included aerial searches, three teams of ground searchers and one technical rope team. A follow up interview with the couple will be conducted by the National Park Service tomorrow.

The Royal Arch route, while popular with more experienced Grand Canyon travelers, is a difficult route. Like many of the routes in the Grand Canyon, completing this loop requires route finding, canyoneering skills and traveling through areas with limited water. Park rangers recommend that people planning to travel in remote areas leave a detailed itinerary with family or friends and that they include an equipment list that includes descriptions of footwear and gear which can aide emergency personnel during a search effort.

For further information on this incident, please contact Maureen Oltrogge at 928-638-7779.

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